



Distance Education

Parent and Student
Handbook Term 2 2020

- ➔ P - Providing
- ➔ R - Real
- ➔ O - Opportunity for
- ➔ P - Professional
- ➔ E - Education
- ➔ L - Learning and
- ➔ L - Leadership



Message from the Principal

School will be different this term and I encourage all of our families to take these challenges in your stride, as we negotiate this new "norm". This handbook will provide you with information about how school will operate and direct you to various support options.

As we transition to Distance Education, the teachers will communicate with your child and provide learning activities to do at home using Connect, as our main online platform. For families, please note that normal communication methods including Connect, Comet Bay College website, emails and other online tools like our Facebook page will also continue to be used.

How can you help? Just as you always do, continue to love and support your child.

We readily acknowledge that every family group is unique and operates on structures and routines that best suit their work life and personal commitments. This handbook is intended as a guide to support you and we understand that you may need to adjust the basic structure of the 'School' day to meet the needs of your family.

All our staff wish you and your family the very best over the coming period of uncertainty and look forward to working alongside you to retain a sense of 'normalcy' in very abnormal circumstances.

Jamie Hayres

PRINCIPAL

General Information for Parents

Parents are encouraged to:

- Establish routines and expectations;
- Define a space for your child to work in;
- Monitor communications from teachers;
- Encourage physical activity and/or exercise;
- Check in with your child/children throughout the day and remember that your child's teachers and others will be available to help;
- Keep your children connected with their peers; however, reinforce your rules around their social media interactions;
- Turn off your automatic Connect email notifications – given the significantly increased use of Connect by all teachers, you can reduce the overwhelming number of Connect emails by turning off email notifications in your Connect account. We recommend parents log directly into Connect to view relevant information.

Attendance

Despite students not being onsite, the Department of Education expects that students are engaging with learning either online or through hardcopy work packages for the duration of the Distance Education timeframe.

Teachers will send weekly 'Letter of Engagement Concern' where students are not participating in the work provided online and student attendance will be recorded as an 'Unexplained Absence' (U).

For students working from Hardcopy packages, if the body of work is not returned, student attendance will be recorded as an 'Unexplained Absence' (U).

Student responsibilities

Parents please be aware that these responsibilities should be age appropriate and adjusted accordingly. For example, what we would expect of a Year 7 student in terms of independent work, time management and organisation is very different to that of a student in Year 10, and different again to the needs and capacity of students in Year 12.

This is by no means an exhaustive list; however, students will be well placed to make steady progress in their online learning environment if they adhere to these suggested guidelines.

Students are encouraged to:

- Establish and/or follow a daily routine for learning;
- Identify a safe, comfortable, quiet space in their home where they can work effectively and successfully;
- Monitor CONNECT to access lessons and to communicate with their teachers;
- Complete tasks with integrity and academic honesty, doing their best work;
- Set goals to map out their workflow for each day;
- Do their best to meet timelines, commitments, and due dates;
- Communicate proactively with their teachers if they cannot meet deadlines or require additional support.

Organising an appropriate learning environment

Try to create a quiet and comfortable learning space that is conducive to this mode of learning. Your child may have a regular place for doing homework under normal circumstances, but this space may not be suitable for working in for an extended period.

A space/location for extended learning should be a public/family space, not in a bedroom, if possible. It should be a place that can be quiet at times and have a strong wireless internet signal.

Hardcopy Work packages

The primary mode of curriculum delivery in Term 2 will be online. If your child does not have sufficient internet or device capacity to engage with learning online, a hardcopy package will be available.

While teachers will endeavour to provide similar resources and tasks in hardcopy format, there are limitations, and the hardcopy packages will not be exactly the same as what is delivered online.

Packages will contain all subjects for each year level. Your child should only complete the subject material applicable to their timetable.

Packages will be available for collection **from Friday 1st May 2020**, on selected Fridays at the following times.

9.00 am -10.00 am	Year 7
10.00 am – 11.00 am	Year 8
11.00 am - 12.00 pm	Year 9
12.00 pm – 1.00 pm	Year 10
1.00 pm – 2.00 pm	Year 11/12

Parents with more than one child and in different year groups can collect all required packages at the allocated collection time of their youngest child.

- The first package will provide 4 weeks work and should be returned on **Friday 29th May.**
- Hardcopy packages should be returned upon collection of the next package, clearly labelled with your child's name and year group on each subject's work.

Student Wellbeing

Parents are urged to be mindful that being confined to home for long periods can cause stress and conflict for any of us. Our students place great emphasis on their interactions with their peers and will be impacted by 'social distancing'.

Some suggestions for looking after your children during this period may include:

- Taking the opportunity to talk to your whole family about what is happening. Understanding the situation will most likely reduce their anxiety and allow them to be critical consumers of the information surrounding the current health crisis.
- Helping your child/ren to consider how they have coped with difficult situations in the past and reassuring them that they will manage with this situation too. Reassure them that reduced peer to peer contact will not be permanent. Suggest they take a break from following regular news updates as overthinking this situation will not be helpful for them in the long run.
- Reminding your child to exercise regularly. Options could include dancing, yoga or using home exercise equipment, if you have it. Exercise is a proven way of managing stress, low mood and depression.
- Encouraging your child/ren to keep in touch with family members and friends via telephone, email or social media (where appropriate). If your child has a Smart Phone, they could always opt to FaceTime their family or friends.

Remember that we are here to support you. If you have any student wellbeing concerns, please contact your child's relevant Associate Dean of Student Support at the College.

Wellbeing Concerns

The Student Support team are continuing to provide support during this time of transition to online learning and distance education. Staff are still available for students to access through until the 9th of April, and following the Easter holidays into Term 2. Term 2 start date for students is Wednesday 29 April 2020.

Student Support Associate Deans and support staff can be contacted directly at the email addresses below should you need to connect with someone.

Associate Deans

Year 7 - Leah Potkin: leah.potkin@education.wa.edu.au

Year 8 - David Shaw: david.shaw@education.wa.edu.au

Year 9 - Tricia Miels: tricia.miels@education.wa.edu.au

Year 10 - Deb Harrison: debbie.harrison@education.wa.edu.au

Year 11 - Jonny Dixon: jonathan.dixon2@education.wa.edu.au

Year 12 - Justin Holt: justin.holt@education.wa.edu.au

Dean Student Support-Martin Donohue: martin.donohue@education.wa.edu.au

Allied Support: Nurse, Chaplain and Psychologists

Students who have been working with the school nurse, chaplain and psychologists will continue to be supported through individual contacts. Additionally, the following supports are also available:

Health and Wellbeing Support

Parents are advised that, if they need urgent mental health advice and support for themselves or their child, there is a 24-hour crisis support line **1800 048 636**.

Education Department support for parents and carers:

<https://www.education.wa.edu.au/learning-at-home/support-for-parents-and-carers>

Kids Helpline	1800 551 800	www.kidshelpline.com.au
Headspace Rockingham	6595 8888	www.headspace.org.au
Youth Beyond Blue	1300 224 636	www.youthbeyondblue.com
Lifeline	13 11 14	www.lifelinewa.org.au/

Parent monitoring

We encourage you to start and finish each day with a simple check-in. These check-ins should be a regular part of each day and start straight away. Not all students initially respond positively to an online learning environment; some struggle with too much independence or lack of structure and the check-ins help keep them on track.

In the morning, you could ask:

- What are you learning today?
- What are your learning objectives or goals?
- How will you be spending your time?
- What resources do you require?
- What support do you need?

In the afternoon, you could ask:

- What did you learn today?
- Identify one thing that was difficult. Either let it go or come up with a strategy to deal with the same problem if it comes up again.
- Consider three things that went well today. Why were they good?
- Are you okay? Do you need to ask your teacher for something? Do you need help with something to make tomorrow more successful?

These specific questions are relevant because they allow your child to process the instructions they have received from their teachers and help them organise themselves and set priorities. Older students may not want to have these check-ins with parents (you probably know this already!) but they should anyway.

Behaviour Expectations

The College expects that all students will conduct themselves according to the normal standards of behaviour while working online. A breach of the behaviour policy can result in suspension of the student's account (access to Connect/Webex), this may also be followed up with an official letter of suspension.

The college expects a high level of behaviour from all students at all times, all Webex sessions will be recorded by teachers and retained on the DoE server, as per DoE record keeping requirements.

Teacher communication with students

Teachers will be communicating with your child during this period using video or audio chat applications such as CONNECT, Webex, Office 365.

Teachers will not use social media (Facebook, Instagram) or other platforms (Skype, Zoom), that are not supported by the Department of Education to communicate with students.

Learning Online

Year 11 & 12 ATAR

Teachers will run Webex lessons at timetabled lesson times. Students are expected to log in and participate in each lesson. The links for Webex lessons will be provided to students in their class Connect page. Connect will also provide students with access to a range of resources. As Connect may be busy and slow at times, students are encouraged to download lesson links and required materials the night before. Connect tends to run very smoothly in the evening and early morning.

Qualification Courses

Teachers will use iVet facilities to monitor student engagement and provide support and feedback to students.

Year 7-12 Classes

Teachers will primarily provide work to be completed through Connect. Students should use their regular timetable for each day to know which subjects to work on. As Connect may be busy and slow at times, students are encouraged to download lesson links and required materials the night before. Connect tends to run very smoothly in the evening and early morning.

Webex Lesson Start Times

Webex lessons will open at the following times:

Period 1	8.45 am
Period 2	9.45 am
Period 3	11.15 am
Period 4	12.15 pm
Period 5	1.45 pm

Assessment

Teachers will be assessing students using a variety of methods during Distance Education. These assessments will be validated either by adjustments to the types of tasks, the way the tasks are conducted or on return to school.

Valid assessment results will be recorded in Reporting to Parents and will be the basis for grading at the end of the semester.

Contacting Teachers

If your child is having any issues or difficulties with their work, they should first try to contact their teacher during a regular lesson time through Connect Discussions. If this is not working effectively, they should use email.

Outside of timetabled lessons teachers will be available to offer support and guidance during regular school hours (8.35 am – 2.50 pm). Please give teachers time to respond as they may be helping other students or running other online lessons.

Please encourage your child to, where able, collect all their questions into one message for a particular teacher, rather than send a separate message for each question.

Learning Concerns

In the first instance, contact your child's teacher and if needed, the relevant Associate Dean of Student Support.

Education Assistants

Education assistants will be assigned to specific SEN students to provide curriculum support while working in Distance Education. The role of the EA will be to help explain tasks, provide further modification to tasks by detailing additional instructions, chunking of tasks, and providing appropriate feedback on progress to students. The EA will liaise with teachers for direction with task modification as required. The EA will communicate with students through Connect, Webex and email.

Digital Citizenship and Online Safety

Students at Comet Bay College are well versed in digital citizenship and online safety. It is important that our students maintain safe and responsible use of information and communication technologies whilst participating in their online learning environment. This includes appropriate use of digital platforms, privacy and information protection, respectful communication and how to deal with online issues.

Technical Issues

Families will receive a supplementary letter with details about how to access and use the online learning platforms of Connect, Webex and Office365.

All technical issues (Connect, Office365, Webex, etc.) should be sent to cometbay.helpdesk@education.wa.edu.au

General enquiries can be sent to cometbay.cc@education.wa.edu.au

Technical Information for Online Learning

This guide will help you continue with your learning in 2020. Comet Bay College is committed to providing you with continued access to quality learning and teaching experiences, support and care. The information below is to help ensure that you, your family and your teachers can continue to work together so that you can achieve your best until you return to the classroom.

We are committed to maintaining a high standard of online safety and security for our students. There are a number of tips provided for parents, but one of the communication rules that we must insist on is that **any communication from students to staff must come from the student's Education Department email address**. This ensures a strong element of security and integrity about student / teacher communications while online. CONNECT email notifications will only go to a student's department email account.

Hardware

You will need reliable access to an internet connection and a computer, iPad, tablet or appropriate mobile device (ideally with a microphone and camera). Teachers will be primarily engaging with you through Connect with some additional support provided through Webex video conferencing. They will be uploading materials, running online tutorials, making announcements on Notices, and using the Discussion Board. As a result, it is important that you can log onto Connect. Instructions for using Connect are included.

Software

Connect

Comet Bay College is a leader in the WA education system in our use of CONNECT as a Learning Management System. We have been engaging with, and building upon, our online capacity since early in 2016. Prior to this current situation most of our classes already existed on CONNECT.



As a minimum for each class, your teacher will be uploading onto CONNECT:

- A welcome message.
- NOTICES for you to read. This may include a task that you will be required to complete or lesson information to assist you in your learning.
- CONTENT for resources to support classroom learning. This may be in the form of a complete lesson sequence or instructions linking to documents in the LIBRARY section.
- The Teaching Program, Assessment outline and any additional resources will be located in the LIBRARY section.
- SUBMISSIONS will be used for tasks, exercises or assessments so that you can submit completed work as required. You will receive feedback electronically.
- DISCUSSIONS TAB will be used by your teachers to allow you to participate and respond to class discussions.
- EMAIL TAB – will allow you to email teachers for information and assistance.

CONNECT : A Step By Step Guide for Parents is available here :

<https://cometbaycollege.wa.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/CONNECT-Step-by-Step-Guide-for-Parents.pdf>

When students login to CONNECT they also have access to User Guides for Primary or Secondary, in the bottom right hand corner of their Welcome page, under CONNECT Help.

Connect Help	
	Student Flyer - Primary
	Student Flyer - Secondary

Cisco Webex Training

Comet Bay College staff also have the capacity to support the learning on CONNECT with Webex Training. This tool offers an exceptionally rich and interactive classroom experience that is simple to use and includes multiple sessions, integrated audio, content sharing and the ability to record classes. You are encouraged to engage in these when they are available, just as if you were in the classroom. Students are not required to load any additional software. Students will be invited to attend a Webex session through an email link or a link within the CONECT section of CONNECT.

Points to note

Webex will work on a Windows/Apple, desktop computer/laptop.

Will it work on an iPad? Tablet? Surface? Yes, but it may not have full functionality, there may be some “tweaks” and some of these platforms are not supported by DoE.

Working from a desktop computer?

You **will** need a headset/speaker **with** a microphone. Without this you **will not** be able to hear or speak during the Webex session.

A simple headset with **no** microphone will allow you to hear the event but not speak. Should this be your situation, you can use the Chat function to participate.

Any type of headset/mic should work, but a USB headset/mic will work best.

To participate in a Webex event, a webcam is not necessary.

Working from a laptop?

A headset and microphone is recommended but not essential if you are working in a quiet space.

Without you can hear via the inbuilt speakers and talk via the inbuilt mic.

A phone headset will work well.

TIP: if you are using a headset, plug it in **before** starting the next part.

You are now ready to login to the Webex Training event.

Open your Internet browser. Webex works best in Microsoft Edge or Safari.

It will work on Chrome, Firefox and Internet Explorer, but be prepared for some possible tweaks or extra downloads.

Additional software

Free **Microsoft Office365 suite** is also available CONNECT : <http://connect.det.wa.edu.au/> or from the Department of Education website. <http://portal.det.wa.edu.au/>

[Students will require their username \(usually firstname.surname\) and password to login.](#)

[The software is authenticated using the student's education department email address \(usually `firstname.surname@student.education.wa.edu.au`\)](#)

Instructions on how to download and install Microsoft Office 365 are available here :

<https://cometbaycollege.wa.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Student-Guide-to-Microsoft-Office-365-ProPlus-2017.pdf>

Students have access to Microsoft Office 365 and have been provided with a range of extra **learning tools** including:

OneDrive: 100 Gigabytes of online file storage per student;

Online applications: online versions of Word, Excel, PowerPoint and OneNote that can be accessed anywhere via a web browser;

ProPlus: download and install the full MS Office suite on up to 5 PCs or Macs, and 5 tablets or smartphones.

There is no charge for using these services and once your account is set up, they are accessed via your student email address and password which are provided by your school. Detailed guides on using the services can be found on the following Microsoft website:

<https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Learn-your-way-around-Office-365-9b7306d3-8d61-4794-bb6f-6520f65956d9>.

Department of Education – Learning at Home

Additional resources, activities and information to help students to continue to learn while at home are available from the Department's 'Learning at Home' website:

<https://www.education.wa.edu.au/learning-at-home>

The site includes resources for subjects in every year group including Year 12 ATAR subjects.

Another Education Department application is 'Minecraft for Education'. Students are able to access this by logging in to their Education Department portal.

Support for Minecraft Education Edition is here : <https://education.minecraft.net/>